

EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

THE ABBOTT CASE by GENE MARINE

THE *Nation*

MAY 19, 1956

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Ambassadors at Large Porgy and Bess

by Ira Wolfert

Great Britain in a Dither

In the Wake of B. and K. . . *by Konni Zilliacus*

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Letters

Pro Lindesmith

Dear Sirs: Professor Lindesmith, whom I missed meeting in London by a day last year when I was on a similar study mission in England, has described accurately the narcotic situation in this country (April 21 issue).

Narcotic addicts are citizens like the rest of us. The punitive legislation which we employ must continue to fail because it has been erected on a fallacious foundation: that drug addiction is a crime. It is, instead, a symptom of psychological disorder, as the article emphasizes.

Appreciation of the addict as a sick man will permit his rehabilitation in hospitals or clinics without drugs where it is humanly possible to do this, and with them where no other course is feasible.

In accepting this responsibility medicine is acting in the highest spirit of altruism because the very nature of the problem will demand, for the most part, government hospitals and clinics.

The Senate subcommittee report which arrived in the mail almost simultaneously with Professor Lindesmith's article shows that our legislators are continuing the impossible task of trying to legislate morals; of seeking to cure disease with policemen's battalions. It is another milestone down the unfortunate punitive path which we have been following all these years.

HERBERT BERGER, M. D.

The Berger Clinic
Tottenville, Staten Island, N. Y.

Dear Sirs: The damage done by the interpretation given to the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914 in preventing physicians from treating narcotic addicts and turning over to the police what is essentially a medical problem can be undone if the law makers are made to understand the nature of the problem as Dr. Lindesmith describes it so well.

N. H. COOPER, M. D.

Welfare and Health Council
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sirs: I enjoyed the article on drug traffic by Professor Lindesmith in the April 21 issue and think it poses an interesting problem. My own belief is that "aking drugs is no more a criminal matter than over-indulgence in alcohol. I feel that unless there is a crime committed by the addict, addiction itself is not a matter for the police, the district attorney or the courts. All too often, in my experience with judges, district attorneys and proba-

tion officers, there has been an air of embarrassment as to what to do with a drug addict who is being charged with taking drugs. This I feel definitely is a matter for doctors, psychiatrists, clinics and other specialists. I would not, however, advocate the use of drug clinics except on a nationwide basis.

CHARLES B. BRADLEY

Youth Counsel Bureau
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Con Lindesmith

Dear Sirs: It was disappointing to me that Alfred Lindesmith missed the most important point. Opiate drug addiction is not, at bottom, "an essentially medical problem," but an essentially sociological one. It is the more disappointing that Mr. Lindesmith, himself a distinguished sociologist, should have missed this.

Are we to draw no inferences from the fact that addiction has become a serious problem in our own highly secularized, competitive, unstable society, while it has remained a minor problem in the relatively more secure society of Great Britain? Is there no significance in the timing of the trend toward juvenile addiction, which, as Mr. Lindesmith points out, began during or shortly after World War I, and accelerated during the Great Depression and World War II? Were these not times when old ideals were crumbling, cynicism, disillusion and despair grew fashionable and adolescents were given little besides inconsistencies to live by? Is it merely coincidental that drug addiction is most widespread among the portions of our population to whom we ration or deny outright those prerequisites we define as the good things of life?

In his peroration, Mr. Lindesmith states: "The main hope of control must be based on prevention." No one, I think, would demur. But I fail to see how he reasons from this proposition to the conclusion that the medical profession must be our rod and staff in the matter. The medical profession is, almost by definition, limited in philosophy and practice to therapy. Treatment of drug addicts? Perhaps. Prevention of drug addiction? I cannot follow.

Nor is medical education currently producing physicians competent to the task Mr. Lindesmith assigns them. Total preventive medicine will require that the physician be, to an extent, a social psychologist, applied anthropologist and social worker, as well as

epidemiologist, psychiatrist and internist. It is conceivable that the arts and sciences of biological man and social man can be thus fruitfully combined and mastered by an individual with sufficient interest, talent and training. I believe the revolution of "social medicine" will, in fact, occur within a lifetime, perhaps within a generation. But I prefer not to make a solution of the addiction problem (read also the divorce problem, suicide problem, etc.) contingent upon the consummation of this revolution.

Mr. Lindesmith is much too impressed with the present capabilities of medical science. He is much too modest concerning the capabilities of social science. My hope (and my hunch) is that the social sciences are not quite so impoverished as social scientists, along with most of the rest of us, may think.

PAM ANDERSON

Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Sirs: The article by Professor Lindesmith makes two rather strong assumptions: (1) That the punitive attitude of the government has increased addiction and (2) That only the medical profession can do anything about it. It will be hard to prove either.

Drug addiction has increased among young people only in a few places like New York and at no greater rate than juvenile delinquency. Generally, many contend that the withholding of punishment has caused such increase while Dr. Lindesmith holds that too much causes it. They cannot both be

(Continued on page 440)

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The Shape of Things

Peace Is Breaking Out

Peace is imminent. The news keeps pushing through the headlines. Even the headlines are less stern: "Dulles to the Brink of Peace," reads one; "Dulles' Hush-Hush Four-Point Plank," reads another. Cold warriors still man the ramparts and the old alarums continue to sound but less often than they did and much feebler. Numberless items in the news, seemingly unrelated, provide striking proof that spring is subversive and peace is near—that is, *acknowledged* peace, publicly accepted peace, not peace in the future but peace here-and-now.

Item: The remarkable way in which the name of General Curtis E. LeMay was driven from the headlines by the President's confident assertion that having what a nation needs in the way of armaments does not necessarily mean having more than some other nation; it means having what you need.

Item: The admission by Allen W. Dulles, director of Central Intelligence Agency, that he finds a measure of "genuine hope" in the spread of "educational, thinking processes" in the Soviet Union. His is the pithiest summing-up of the recent goings-on in Russia that we have seen: "education educates."

Item: The hostile reception accorded George Brown, Labor M. P., by an audience in Liverpool for his churlish behavior at the Labor Party's dinner for Messrs. B. and K. in London (see article by Konni Zilliacus on page 424).

Item: Mr. George Kennan's recent statement in Pittsburgh that a new U. S. policy toward Russia is "decidedly overdue." We should, he says, "adopt a more relaxed and a more normal attitude" in our dealings with the Russians.

Item: The Pulitzer Prize awards to Lauren K. Soth of the Des Moines *Register and Tribune* for an editorial inviting a Soviet farm delegation to visit this country and to William Randolph Hearst, Jr., Kingsbury Smith and Frank Conniff for their remarkable interviews of Soviet leaders. (*The Nation* praised the initiative shown by these journalists at the time and nominated Mr. Soth for a prize; see our issues of March 12, March 26, May 28 and August 13, 1955).

Item: Speeches by Democratic Senators Hubert R. Humphrey and Mike Mansfield "challenging" the Administration's emphasis on the military side of its foreign-aid program.

Item: Public-opinion polls indicating that a great

many Americans would not object if Messrs B. and K. were to visit Washington.

Item: Justice William O. Douglas' recent speech at Roosevelt College ("the whole theory of containment is obsolete and outdated").

The signs are clear even if the headlines are still a bit on the lurid side; peace is breaking out.

Trials Are for Courts

The marriage of an American actress to the Prince of Monaco is news, big news, but when a federal district judge publicly rebukes J. Edgar Hoover only a few newspapers deign to record his comments. Out in Butte, Montana, Federal Judge William D. Murray became annoyed with Mr. Hoover's well-known habit of issuing a barrage of press releases on the eve of trials in which the FBI has a special interest. In this instance, the head of the FBI was quoted in Washington as saying that a Smith Act defendant who was to be tried in Butte had travelled in many communities in Montana and Idaho in carrying out his duties as a Communist Party organizer. He was also quoted as saying that this defendant had written articles and given speeches in support of the Communist cause. The statements, of course, were widely reported in the local press. Here is what Judge Murray had to say about the statements in open court when the defendant applied to him for a reduction in bail:

Such statements by the director . . . are not in accord with the American principle of trial in a court, and I condemn in the strongest terms the issuance of statements by police officials or investigating officers with reference to facts in the case, presenting them to the public in an effort, apparently, to try the case outside of court.

If this case had been in my division, immediately that I saw such a statement, Mr. Hoover and his agents would have been called before me to account for such un-American, unfair tactics; and so, I say to you, and to all the public, that Mr. Hoover's statements as to the facts are not before this court, and the court makes no decision upon anything Mr. Hoover may believe, whether they are true or not. The place to present these facts is in court, and let him be advised of it . . .

Nickel Millionaires

Fortune editor William H. Whyte, Jr., has come up with a new term, "budgetism," namely "a person's desire to regularize his income by having it removed from his own control and disciplined by external forces." Young American homemakers, hypnotized by the regular rhythm of their monthly payments, hold

weirdly mistaken notions of the amount of interest they are paying. The couples interviewed in this survey made an average estimate of 5 1/3 per cent per annum when asked about interest rates on monthly car-purchase contracts; the actual interest paid was 19 per cent. These junior executives, trained to manage other people's money and affairs, exhibit "an almost romantic disinterest in money." "What," one young man is quoted as saying, "would any of us have today if we waited to pay cash?" Credit men, amazed at the willingness of these young people to stay "bought up," point to the fact that some stores are making more profit on the interest charges than on the goods sold. *The Wall Street Journal* made a similar study of today's "nickel millionaires" and reached the same conclusions. Without exception those interviewed believe that the government won't "let another real depression come about."

Their attitude toward money and how to spend it is an aspect of their experience; they are too young, in most instances, to have known the general economic debacle of the 1930s except as children. But perhaps the most remarkable aspect of their attitude toward money and debt and savings—"thrift" has become "un-American" in their eyes—is the fact that the close budgeting of income provides these young suburbanites with a peace of mind that is "more coveted than luxury itself." These superbly disciplined recruits in the new mass army that has been enrolled to cart away the

surpluses created by the American industrial machine seem to have nothing to worry about; theirs is not to do or die but to spend and buy, consume and pay.

Spring in Bexar County

Acting as though in response to Don Marquis' lines, "Oh, what the hell, it's Spring! And just for the sake of argyment, I'll show 'em who is King," two teen-age Negro boys jumped into a swimming pool in San Antonio on April 28 and thereby ended a century of segregation. Before the day was out, twenty-four Negro youngsters made the same big dive—and nothing, absolutely nothing, happened. Police were on hand to quell riots which never happened; no "troops and bayonets" were used. Even earlier, the city's public golf courses and tennis courts, libraries and municipal auditorium had been "desegregated" and the Bexar County Medical Society, inspired by the new spirit, had removed a restrictive clause from its charter which barred the admission of qualified Negroes to membership. Not a drop of blood was shed in Bexar County as these inroads were recorded on an "ancient way of life"; the sun still shines and the skies have not fallen. Texas, of course, is not "Deep South," but Bexar County's experience with desegregation is relevant to much wider areas of the South than the fearful moderationists in our midst are willing to concede.

BRITAIN IN A DITHER

In the Wake of B. and K. . . by Konni Zilliacus

London
THE RECENT Bulganin-Khrushchev visit has given peace a top priority on the British national agenda and has started a competition between the major parties as to which shall be the pace-makers in peace-making. Involved in this competition are a host of embarrassing dilemmas which the Russians—with a nice sense of non-discrimination—heaped with equal generosity upon the leadership of the Conservative Party, the Labor Party and the general public alike.

"Bulganin put us over a barrel in what he said about disarmament," a member of the Eden government admitted privately. "There is no

KONNI ZILLIACUS, M. P., is a member of the Labor Party's left wing.

doubt at all that the West has, as Bulganin charged, run away from its own disarmament proposals." And the public, who are getting sick of staggering along under a £1,500,000,000-a-year defense budget (one third of the total budget, 9 per cent of the national income, and amounting to thirteen shillings a week for every man, woman and child in the country) are beginning to want to know why. After all, they say, the Russians want peace, don't they? So what's it all about?

THAT feeling is strengthened by the Soviet trade offer of orders up to a billion pounds over the next five years. Eden has emphasized that these orders will mostly fall on the already over-burdened engineering industry and used that fact as the basis for a little sermon to the engi-

neering workers. But the March, 1956, Defense White Paper points out that defense orders compete directly with civilian production in the engineering industry. Aneurin Bevan has pointed the moral: it is no use for the Prime Minister to point out, he says, that we cannot fill Soviet orders unless we step up production in this industry. We can't do that until we slash defense expenditures and release a large part of the 1,500,000 men locked up in the armed forces and the war industries, with corresponding amounts of materials and machinery.

On top of this, cold warriors are haunted by the fear, from what the Russians let drop, that they are getting ready, after one cut of 640,000, to slash Soviet forces by a further 1,000,000 men. That would be the unkindest cut of all, a really mean

and dirty trick—unilateral disarmament, no less!

What that would do to an over-taxed British public, who are already getting restive about keeping four divisions in Germany and two-year conscription, is what worries the authorities. The Germans haven't helped, either, by their refusal to help pay for those four divisions, by cutting their own conscription to a year (with the prospect of it being abolished altogether) and by lowering their taxes. Nor have the French, by withdrawing twelve of their fourteen divisions for their disastrous and, it may well be, suicidal colonial war in Algeria. In short, NATO is in ruins today, militarily a very bad joke and politically looking more and more like an expensive mistake. And British opinion is beginning to feel that we are the fall guys in this setup and have been taken for a ride by Mr. Dulles and Company.

THAT IS one aspect of the growing feeling, among Conservatives as well as Labor, that U. S. intransigence is making it impossible for us to arrive at a reasonable settlement with the USSR, piling impossible defense burdens on our backs and strangling our trade, while U. S. policy and oil interests are backing Arab nationalism in order to take over from us in the Middle East.

The grievance about the American embargo on supplying China with trucks and tractors—the Chinese say they are in the market for 1,000,000, which would be a boon to a British automobile industry beginning to work on short time—is now reinforced by Eden's declaration that from one-third to one-half of what the Russians want is on the American-imposed blacklist.

The Soviet offer to stop supplying any Middle Eastern country with arms and to cooperate with the other powers to keep the peace in the Middle East, if Britain will do the same and drop the Baghdad Pact, was welcomed by public opinion. But one Foreign Office official has let slip that it was "embarrassing," because Britain was committed to supplying certain Arab states with arms and wanted to stick to the pact.

Khrushchev's warning about Germany, in his straight-from-the-shoulder speech at that famous dinner party of the Labor chieftains, is, I believe, being taken pretty seriously

in official quarters: he said the Soviet government remained willing to settle the German problem within the framework of an all-European agreement, through the United Nations or otherwise, to which both the East and West would be parties. But if the West went on trying to arm Germany and to include her in a military alliance against the USSR, Moscow would once more have to reply to this Western policy by herself making a deal with Germany. "We can," he said in effect, "offer her national unity, unlimited markets and as much arms as she wants if she leaves NATO and enters into a friendship pact with us. If that happens—don't blame us. You have asked for it."

The truth is there is a profound contradiction in the government's position. On the one hand, Eden admits the Russians, too, want peace and professes to desire peaceful co-existence with them; on the other, he clings to a vast defense budget, to Western alliance in Europe and the Middle East and to the Dulles policy, embodied in the Declaration of Washington and in the 1955 and 1956 Defense White Papers, of "anti-Communist liberation" (I prefer to all it inverted Trotskyism—"permanent counter revolution"). That is an interventionist and aggressive policy that affords no basis for settlement. The danger of having these contradictions brought home to them probably accounts for the government's reluctance to have a debate in the House on the Russians' visit. They are afraid of being found out by the country. And the fact that Labor is caught in the same contradictions probably accounts for the readiness of the Labor leaders to fall in with this dodging of a debate. They are afraid of falling out with their own rank and file.

ON PAPER, the Labor Party has officially broken with the bipartisan foreign policy and committed itself to proposals of its own on how to reach agreement with the Russians in Europe and the Middle East. But it never occurred to the leadership to question Khrushchev and Bulganin in order to find out whether they thought Labor's policy might form an acceptable basis of negotiation. On the contrary, they decided to leave relations between governments out of their discussions, thus tacitly



Fitzpatrick in St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Height of the London Social Season

accepting the view that Labor still adheres to the bipartisan policy. They further decided that while not discussing with the Russians how to make peace (which, I happen to know, is what the Soviet leaders expected them to discuss and were ready to discuss), they would insist on raising the question of Social Democrats in prison.

It was bad to raise this subject divorced from the content of how to improve relations between the two countries. It was worse to do so in a gathering of fifty or sixty people instead of in a private talk. It was worst of all to do so on the basis of wholesale lists prepared by irresponsible and vindictive *émigrés*, and to adopt the *émigré* point of view—that is, to hold the Soviet government responsible for political prisoners in other countries and to talk, as did Morgan Phillips, the secretary general of the party, of "citizens of the Baltic states in Soviet custody."

This provoked the famous row at the Labor Party dinner for the Russians and may have touched off a further struggle between Right and Left in the party. But the practical conclusion is already being drawn that the Labor Party must formulate clearly, and its leaders must take their stand and act upon, a positive policy of its own. If not, the Tories may steal a march on Labor in the jockeying that has been the aftermath of Khrushchev's and Bulganin's shrewdly-timed and shrewdly-executed tour.

THE JURY SAID "DEATH"

Second Thoughts on a Murder . . by G. Marine

ON APRIL 28, 1955, fourteen-year-old Stephanie Bryan started through the parking lot of Oakland's plush Claremont Hotel. She carried a purse, a French textbook and another book, purchased only minutes before, on the care of parakeets as pets. The hotel lot was a frequently-used short cut from Stephanie's junior high school to her sedate, upper-middle-class home; at its edge, she separated from a schoolmate and was never again seen alive by friends or relatives.

An intense, statewide search for the girl remained fruitless for eleven weeks, until July 15. On that evening, a family named Abbott reported finding, in the dirt basement of their Alameda home, a purse which apparently was the one Stephanie had been carrying. The next day, police dug in the basement and turned up the parakeet book, several other books and a brassiere.

On July 20, bloodhounds uncovered a brown and white saddle shoe and searchers unearthed the decomposed body of the girl, buried shallowly on a steep forested slope about 285 miles from the Oakland-Alameda area—but only about 335 feet from the Abbotts' mountain cabin. Burton Abbott, a twenty-seven-year-old accounting student, was arrested and charged with kidnapping and murder. He was not charged with criminal assault or rape (the body was too badly decomposed to offer evidence). He insisted, and still insists, on his innocence.

The trial began November 7 and lasted through three months—forty-seven days in court, and the jury deliberated for seven days more. In the last week of January, 1956, it found Abbott guilty of first-degree murder and of kidnapping with intent to do bodily harm—both crimes which in California carry mandatory death sentences in the absence of

leniency recommendations from the jury. There were no such recommendations for Abbott.

The press covered the trial with a macabre completeness. Whether the coverage was prejudicial to the defendant, as many charged, is a fascinating study but out of place here. What must be noted for our purposes is that everyone in the bay area, grade-school children included, had access to the facts of the trial and was ready with an opinion. At trial's end a significant segment of the public was still not completely convinced by the entirely circumstantial case against the student. No murder weapon was found. No proof or motive, opportunity or acquaintance between Abbott and the girl was forthcoming.

This, in turn, raised in the public mind the ominous question of the death penalty. True, the case against Abbott, while circumstantial, was good; given the facts as they are known, most reasonable people would tend to agree that there was a decided probability of guilt. Perhaps, in the absence of so irrevocable a penalty, most might have found him guilty.

BUT THE Abbott case is one where an alternative explanation, were it to be shown to be true, would be a sensation but would really surprise nobody. During the trial, this reporter was in a department-store employees' cafeteria one afternoon when a salesworker rushed in with a crazy rumor that Abbott's wife and his brother had confessed to committing the murder and framing Abbott; the impressive thing was the immediacy with which all of those present, including some who moments before had been arguing Abbott's guilt, accepted it as true.

Capital punishment, as it happens, was already a hot issue in California. In 1955, one bill for outright abolition and another for a five-year, experimental moratorium were introduced in the legislature and are now

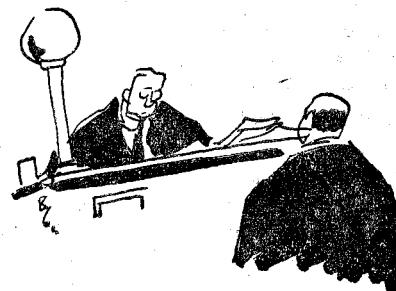
under study; a third bill, to make the penalty apply only on a specific jury recommendation, actually passed the Assembly only to fail in the Senate. A moratorium was endorsed by the Attorney General, who is also the state's leading Democrat. Begun by religious groups, the movement for it has spread. In Los Angeles, a KTTV commentator gave arguments on both sides, then conducted a poll; among 15,000 who voted, the result was nine to six against the death penalty. In San Francisco, the Scripps-Howard News ran a series of front-page articles and assisted in producing a TV program on the subject.

The Abbott case, so far, has done no harm to the battlers against the gas chamber. For in this case, more so than in many, it is clearly apparent that any death penalty must involve the possibility of legally murdering an innocent man.

Why, then—if these questions are so apparent to the general public—was Abbott found guilty, or why was he not found guilty of a lesser degree of kidnapping or murder, or at least given the benefit of the jury's recommendation for leniency? If the evidence so affected the public, why didn't it so affect the jury?

The answer, I think, is threefold. It can be found, first, in the composition of the jury; second, in the nature of the crime itself; and third, in the shrewdly calculated strategies of District Attorney Frank Coakley and his assistant, Folger Emerson.

The influence of the first factor is glaringly evident. When a capital case is tried in California, the prose-



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cution asks each prospective juror about his or her attitude toward capital punishment. Anyone who demonstrates a shred of civilized doubt is summarily rejected; in the Abbott case, one venireman after another went down on this point. So long as the death penalty remains in the law, it can hardly be different; but it remains a fact that a good many of Burton Abbott's peers could not be represented on the jury. And it is a fact, too, that in selecting twelve jurors and two alternates who had no qualms about a death sentence, Coakley and Emerson were simply insuring that a guilty verdict, on either count, could have no other result.

The press made much of Judge Wade Snook's routine comment that the jury had available eight possible verdicts, four on each count. Under California's "Little Lindbergh" law, kidnapping with intent toward bodily harm is a capital crime; should the jury recommend leniency, the sentence would be reduced to life imprisonment without parole. Under a separate law, Abbott could have been found guilty of kidnapping with no specific intent, a one-to-twenty-five-year offense. Or, of course, he might have been found innocent. Similar divisions apply to the murder charge. Theoretically, Abbott might have been found guilty of kidnapping without intent and of second-degree murder, and with concurrent sentences could have escaped with five years in prison.

BUT ONE must remember the nature of the crime. The girl's decaying body was found fully clothed except for underwear. Her panties, apparently removed by slashing with a knife, were knotted around her neck (the cause of death, however, was blows on the skull); her brassiere was found intact, hundreds of miles from the body, buried in Abbott's basement.

Parental supervision of Stephanie was strict and her behavior unimpeachable. Mrs. Bryan was immediately alarmed when her daughter was late by only a few minutes. The girl was in all respects a neat, perfectly mannered, well-behaved child with good school grades and no wild tendencies.

Into this picture intruded the sudden violence of murder. Should it



be proved to the jury that Abbott was the killer, there could be little hope for any verdict short of death. Emerson, the assistant district attorney, made the point with perfect clarity: "If there ever was a crime that fitted the punishment of death, this is it." He was right; it was, as he said, the "foulest and blackest" of crimes, and a jury composed of people who had explicitly accepted the principle of capital punishment actually had only two alternatives: acquittal or death. Any other verdict would have been a confession of doubt—and with so hideous a crime, no juror could have reconciled such a doubt with any kind of guilty verdict at all.

Coakley and Emerson were completely aware of this death-or-nothing situation, and their strategy was designed to that end. Only this can make clear their trial behavior. The tricks were constant. At one point Judge Snook ruled against the introduction of a particularly gory photograph on the defense's objection that it was presented "for no other reason than to inflame the jury and raise prejudice against this defendant." On the same day, Coakley introduced into evidence, for "identification," the clothes from the dead girl's body—clothes which, of course, had not been washed, but which had been kept in a closed box. The odor drove some people from the courtroom—and the effect on the jury was obvious.

It was in the closing arguments, however, that the death-penalty strategy of the prosecution was easiest to study. Emerson, beginning with the sentence quoted earlier

about the foulness of the crime, pointed out quietly that the state "endeavors to take a life in the most humane way possible," and, lest there be any lingering reluctance, continued with a question dubious in both logic and syntax but enormously effective: "Wouldn't it have been a blessing to Stephanie that if she had to die that she could have died that way than the way she did?"

And then another theme intruded itself, one which has a tremendous bearing on the death-penalty arguments. "I think," Emerson purred, "that what happened to Stephanie before she was killed was worse than death itself."

Back in early December, a pathologist had testified that it was impossible to determine whether Stephanie had been raped. That was the only testimony on the subject of sex; yet in his opening argument Emerson stated suavely that "I think it is time to say from the evidence in this case that the original intent of the defendant when he kidnapped Stephanie Bryan was to commit a sex crime" (emphasis mine). This may have been; but for the death-or-nothing strategy of the prosecution, the question of sexual attack was apparently raised more as a tactic than to provide a motive.

THIS issue was clearly drawn. Defense Attorney Stanley D. Whitney, his finger pointing at his client, argued: "There is no evidence that man is a lunatic." Reminding the jury that Dr. Douglas Kelley, University of California psychiatrist, had examined Abbott before the trial, Whitney went on: "Don't you believe if that man was a lunatic, Dr. Kelley would have been on the witness stand telling you? Why, of course he would."

Not necessarily; the prosecution knew what it was doing when it neglected to enter psychiatric evidence. In fact, Whitney might have gained by calling Kelly himself. Had the psychiatrist testified, Whitney would certainly have pinned him down on Abbott's sanity.

And had Kelley indicated that Abbott was "sane," the jury, confident that no sane person could have done what was done to Stephanie Bryan, might well have decided that he was not the man. Had Kelley called Abbott "insane," the injustice of the death penalty would have

been all too evident even to the lay jurors. It was much easier for the prosecution to leave the question of Abbott's sanity to the final arguments.

On January 17, Coakley stood before the jury, his body aggressively crouched, his hands clutching the intact brassiere and the slashed panties. Brandishing the dead girl's garments, he shouted, "You've heard the defense counsel ask, 'What is the motive for his crime? What is the reason? Why? Why? Why?'" He offered the underwear in mute reply (to a question the defense never asked), and went on from there: the body, he said, was buried where the defendant could easily "relive the experience"; he expressed the belief (unsupported in any way) that the defendant occasionally fondled the brassiere for sexual gratification; treading cautiously, he likened Ab-

bott's "composure" to that of a psychopath, and having established the identification, went on to describe "such people" in terms that were obviously meant to be applicable to Abbott. The defendant became "the typical psychopath," the "pathological liar." Of the removal of the underwear, Coakley snarled that "Those things happen only in murders committed by sex maniacs, by perverts and by psychopathic personalities." He seemed determined to destroy any image of Abbott as a human being and to replace it with a picture of some alien, perverted creature completely beyond human understanding. He closed with the classic argument of prosecutors in capital crimes, phrased in a metrical, alliterative and striking sentence: "Are you going to set him free to sing again his siren song of sex?"

After fifty-two hours of deliberation, almost all the jurors were still visibly shaken; many retreated to hideaways to recover. But the foreman, ex-marine Harry Whitehead, made it clear that Coakley's arguments, replacing as they did any kind of evidence about Abbott's mental condition, had their effect on a jury untrained and uninformed in the subtleties of mental disease. "I have no more compunction stepping on him," Whitehead told reporters, "than I would stepping on the head of a rattlesnake. . . . He's just a mad dog that has to be put out of the way."

And there, of course, was the prosecution's strategy: Abbott was a dog, a rattlesnake, anything but a human being—anything that would make his execution something nearer an animal hunt than a murder of legal vengeance.

JIM CROW IN CHURCH

Challenge to Christians . . . by Stanley Rowland, Jr.

THE SPARKS of race violence in the South erupt from one of the century's most explosive and hopeful forces—the revolt of the majority against "white supremacy." From Alabama to Africa, race tensions delineate only one aspect of the current world revolution of the downtrodden and oppressed. But race is perhaps the most sensitive aspect.

In this racial crisis, where stands the Christian?

Before World War II the churchman frequently postured like the ostrich, head in the pastoral sand, while men practiced discrimination and some Christians decried the church as the nation's "most segregated" institution. In recent years and months church leaders in the North have been thundering against race prejudice and for integration. Their words are echoed, calmly yet

unequivocally, by a number of church leaders in the South. Christian leadership, for the most part, wants integration.

But there is something wrong. Many local churches seem paralyzed by custom and inertia; they are witnessing against discrimination only in spots, and church leaders are being left with their platitudes down. To understand why, it's useful to look, first, at the historical background of Christianity and its attitude toward racialism; second, at what church leadership is now saying; third, at the contrast between the professions at high level and the performance at parish level—and the reason for the discrepancy.

In the era of colonialism and slavery, part of the "white man's burden" was to preach Christ to the non-whites. White supremacy was supported partly by a pseudo-scientific argument that contrasted European civilization with barbarian cultures. Some saw primitive natives as living "missing links" in the evolutionary scale. This idea had a nasty jolt

when some of the "missing links" began to win college degrees. Modern biology and psychology have reduced the argument to farce, though it's still bruited by some extremists.

White supremacy was also supported in part by a pseudo-Christian argument that rested on scattered quotes from the Old Testament, notably Genesis 9:25 and Genesis 21:10, where it is said that the son of a slave should be cast out and not inherit with the son of the free. This argument and the pseudo-scientific one boil down to the idea of inherent superiority for peoples of a tribe (civilization). Blood descendancy was deemed important, and "pure Anglo-Saxon blood" is praised today by men of the White Citizens Councils. (One remembers a German *fuehrer* who ranted about pure Aryan blood.)

The hollowness of the pseudo-Christian argument is plain from an honest reading of the Scriptures, which repeatedly emphasizes the oneness of all persons and races in

STANLEY ROWLAND, Jr., is a religious-news reporter for the *New York Times*. This article, of course, does not necessarily reflect the views of the *Times*.

Christ. Nor does the existence of slavery in St. Paul's time mean it was condoned, and those who quote Scripture to support racialism are really trying to ossify Christianity in an old and dead form it never really had.

The argument isn't left a prop when one views the Bible in the perspective of a story of progressive spiritual insight by a people—the progressive revelation of God to man. The tribal God who led the Jews out of Egypt is seen by Jeremiah as the God who will be present everywhere with the persecuted, while the complex God of the New Testament comes equally for all men. Christianity not only affirms racial equality; it demands that its adherents work as “reconciling agents” in the struggle for brotherhood.

Non-whites use the Bible and Christianity, brought to them by whites, as one basis for their demands for equality and integration. Negroes in this nation created the spirituals in the muck of slavery and the white light of their love of God, and these songs are still rolling down the years, springing from the lips of a people who are not going to be shoved to the rear any more, and who are going to be equal *with* the white man—or in spite of him. Christian leaders regard the challenge as an opportunity to serve God by advancing human brotherhood.

CHURCH leadership and governing bodies are emphatically condemning discrimination. Archbishop Joseph F. Rummel of New Orleans has branded segregation as “morally wrong and sinful” and declared his intention to integrate the city's parochial-school system, largest single school unit in the state. Those who try to stop him may be excommunicated. Nor is this an idle threat. Three women were excommunicated last winter when they beat the teacher of an integrated class. (They were reinstated after repenting.)

On the whole, Louisiana Catholics have taken this quietly. They have no fear of being “swamped,” since less than 5 per cent of America's 9,000,000 Negro church-goers are Roman Catholic (the rest are Protestant). Some local priests may not agree with integration. But when a Roman Catholic priest disagrees with a policy laid down by his

bishop and backed by the Vatican, there's little the priest can do except pray.

The Protestant Episcopal Church has condemned segregation and is working for integration. A notable example is south Florida, where the diocese summer camp and conferences have been integrated and further integration is proceeding. In South Carolina, however, Episcopalians have clambered into a refuge of ambiguity, from which vantage point they are muttering about voluntary racial alignments and beseeching the troubled waters to be calm.

The Methodist Church, largest Protestant body in the nation, recently moved to abolish its segregated Central Jurisdiction. The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has flatly declared for integration. Delegates of the Southern Baptist Convention, largest church body in the South, surprised even themselves when they endorsed the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregated schools. Leaders of the Congregational Church are thundering against racial prejudice, major Lutherans want no part of it and spokesmen of other churches are emphatic in their condemnations.

The National Council of Churches, a federation of thirty Protestant and Orthodox bodies, has condemned racial inequality and has quietly launched a program of interracial Christian conference teams to help communities over the jolts of integration. Inconclusive samplings indicate that 10 per cent or more of the nation's churches are racially mixed, which is much better than a decade ago but hardly constitutes an inclusive Christian fellowship.

The situation at the local level is pinpointed by a poll a Southern Sunday-school teacher took among

more than a hundred adults in his class. They agreed unanimously that segregation is un-Christian and undemocratic, and all said integration is inevitable. Yet the great majority also agreed to oppose integration and hoped it would not come for their children. It should be noted that these people do not belong to the violent fringe of Negro-haters, but are thoughtful enough about their religion to attend Sunday school and recognize Christian teachings of brotherhood.

This absurd contrast between what they know as their Christian duty and what they will actually do points to the painful reason for local inertia: the churches have compromised too much with local custom, identified too much with the society they seek to serve. Speaking boldly would have meant pain and heavy loss of financial support. So in many local churches the soaring voice of prophecy has been sacrificed on the altar of Mammon.

Churches know they must burrow deep in their communities, feeding the spiritual hunger of the people and helping the downtrodden with social action. But if they are to be Christian first and only secondly national and local—which is the only way to be Christian—then they must always stand enough apart from the local community to act as its conscience. This, in the main, they have not done. For if segregation is un-Christian today it was un-Christian yesterday and before. Thus the local churches should long ago have been prepared by their pastors and church leaders; had that happened, today they would be spearheading integration instead of jangling along behind the express train of history.

BUT THERE are exceptions on the local level. Roman Catholic Bishop Vincent S. Waters of North Carolina faced mob violence in at least one town where he forced the integration of churches. In Talladega, Alabama, one hundred white and Negro Protestant students from ten colleges met recently to hammer out methods of integration. The spark of their meeting was lighted at Christmas in the little town of Athens, Ohio, where 3,500 students from eighty nations discussed the Christian role in the revolutionary world and in the attainment of racial equality.



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Messages of support and thousands of dollars are pouring in to aid the Negro bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. But only one white clergyman in Montgomery is supporting The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King and other boycott leaders. Twenty-four clergymen were indicted for leading the boycott; Dr. King was convicted, his home was bombed, but he refuses to hate and has lifted the boycott above race to the plane of Christian love and prophecy. In this spirit it rolls on. In Dr. King's words:

If we are arrested every day, if we are exploited every day, if we are trampled over every day, don't let anyone pull you so low as to

hate them. We must use the weapon of love. We must have compassion and understanding for those who hate us. We must realize so many people are taught to hate us that they are not totally responsible for their hate. But we stand in life at midnight, we are always on the threshold of a new dawn.

All of which sounds a little disquieting to the countless comfortable church-goers who are busy knitting knotty socks for the poor and clinging to custom. And well it might sound disquieting, for the United States is in many ways a post-Christian civilization peopled by creatures of a popular culture.

Much of our popular culture con-

sists in a worship of the economic boom and the female bust. A number of churches are busy baptizing secularism or trying to grin in the tentacles of local custom and prejudice, while millions of people are prey to breezes of doctrine and follow frantic little gods—McCarthyism, White Citizens Councils, religious quackery and shallow optimism. It is in this society that a key part of the century's racial struggle is being waged and watched by the world, and it is from this context that Christians must stride to shoulder the Cross for human brotherhood. With them rides much of the future social vitality of Christianity in America.

PORGY AND BESS

Ambassadors at Large . . by Ira Wolfert

IN THE negotiations now going on in Geneva between the United States and Communist China, a bargaining point is *Porgy and Bess*. "Let our people out of jail and we'll let you see it." These words have not been spoken by an American at the Swiss conference talks. They would cause both sides to lose face. But they are understood there nevertheless, having been uttered and replied to both in Washington and Peking in the manner appropriate for reaching the ears of those concerned.

This is only one of the unexpected roles the twenty-year-old folk opera has played recently. For the last four years it has been functioning as a kind of guided missile in the cold war. United States General Dale O. Smith saw its impact on his command area (he was then in Italy) and wrote, "I intend to recommend that the entire company be decorated" by our government. Our ambassadors have stood clamorously in line to use it as an instrument of foreign policy. Wherever invited, it

has been only after debate in the highest government councils—in the Kremlin by the "collective leadership" itself. The show was on the table at the summit conference in Geneva. It was thrust back under the table at the abortive negotiations over Point Three ("Cultural Relations") of the agenda of the Foreign Ministers Conference last fall.

IS EVERYBODY nuts? You hear of people paying \$150 for tickets to *My Fair Lady*. But a mere show to be treated by the leading actors in international affairs as if it were as important as an oil well? Still, it actually happened. President Eisenhower himself—that avid reader of boy stories of the West whose loftiest aspirations to art are only an approach shot to the magazine cover—wrote Blevins Davis, president of the non-profit corporation that produces *Porgy and Bess*, "I cannot emphasize too strongly how serious and enduring the value of [*Porgy and Bess's* political] work seems to me."

What's *Porgy and Bess* got that can make it accomplish political feats of serious and enduring worth? The answer may lie less in the show itself than in the world in which it is being shown. When it first opened

twenty years ago, it was a flop. It cost George Gershwin \$10,000 to have the orchestration printed. His brother Ira told me that \$10,000 was exactly all George had made out of it before he died. During World War II, in a new production by Cheryl Crawford, it became an American hit—no *Oklahoma* or *South Pacific*, but solid nevertheless. That has also been its lot in the United States in its newest production by Robert Breen—a smash but not a crazy smash. Only in Europe, South America and the Middle East and there only in the cold-war years has Breen's production made *Porgy and Bess* the best known work of theatrical art ever created by Americans. Significantly, that darling of the American public, *Oklahoma*, fell flat on its face before the same audiences at the same time.

In fact it was Europe—specifically in the person of a man whistling the music to himself on a Paris street—that gave Breen the idea of putting on a new production of the folk opera. The British and the French invited him to put it on in Berlin and the State Department agreed it might not be a bad idea to have Negro stage people serving as ambassadors of the American way.

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IRA WOLFERT, author of *Married Men*, *Tucker's People* and other novels, recently toured the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe with the *Porgy and Bess* troupe.

When the company arrived in Berlin, the Communist press ignored it. But the Western sector was stuck with it and had to comment. "Decadent" was the word used. It's a word favored by Europeans who believe that American life lacks a central meaning. Hollow at the core, we ravage art, politics, life itself for mere "kicks." Man and his great works are cathedrals of the sensibilities, but we use them only to pray that they grant us what Coca-Cola can give. So they believe who throw the word "decadent" at our American efforts.

WE NEED divisions of American troops to chase the Russians out," complained a West Berlin journalist at a press conference before the opening, "and you send us a company of actors."

But then an unexpected thing happened. Even though the East Berlin press remained silent, Communist marks began to appear at the West Berlin box office. Ordinarily, these are acceptable in West Berlin only at the rate of five for one. But our State Department alertly ordered them taken in at face value, one for one. The flood from the East became so great the press there finally had to give in. Four days before the closing, the first news of the show appeared in an East Berlin newspaper.

The success set a great many things in motion—in Washington and abroad. American companies cannot perform abroad without subsidies. Our wages are too high. For instance, an English production of *Call Me Madame*, with but two Americans in the cast, had to pay out only \$2,000 a week in salaries to play opposite *Porgy and Bess*, whose all-American cast collects \$15,000 a week (only half of it payable in the currency of the country). The State Department, made lively by the success in Berlin, wanted more of the same. It put up the money out of its own funds to underwrite losses, and asked ANTA to pick other shows that could do as well abroad.

This made for an expert team—ANTA's show-business experts deciding on the shows and foreign-policy experts deciding where they should play. But this was America, understand, and soon everybody was getting into the act. Under President Eisenhower's prodding, an Emer-

gency Fund was set up with an annual appropriation of \$5,000,000 to finance propaganda ventures—half to underwrite trips abroad for American industrial exhibits, half to underwrite trips abroad for American art, chiefly theatrical productions. With a Congressional appropriation to be accounted for, the experts went out the window and politics came in. ANTA's power to pick the shows was reduced to advising on them and the Operations Coordinating Board—the old Psychological Warfare outfit with its ramifications in the Defense Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the United States Information Service, the State Department and Congress—took over.

Everybody who could play a musical saw wanted to go abroad and strike a blow for our side in the war for men's minds and also to get a piece of the fame and the \$5,000,000. An astonishing number seemed to know Congressmen who didn't see why a home town "combo"—naturally from the Congressman's home town—couldn't show off the American way just as well as those big-shot Broadwayites. It's an old story that it takes heroes to keep Congressional appropriations safe from political pressure, and the present Administration has never successfully been accused of being heroic. But this summer hearings are being held in Congress to determine whether the so-called Emergency Fund should be made permanent and an attempt will be made to take the program out of politics and give it back to the experts.

WHILE ALL this was going on, *Porgy and Bess* was singing and prancing its big, warm, wild heart out in cities as far apart geographically as Belgrade and Lima, as far apart politically as Cairo and Tel-Aviv. In Zagreb, tickets were in such demand that families divided up to keep the peace, one seeing the first half of the show, the other the second. Nightly at every intermission, anyone standing in the lobby was bowled over by the stampede to collect coats and give seat stubs to those who had been waiting outside for their turn. The company became the first American one to play La Scala in Milan, and the show itself was the only one ever to play that historic house for an entire week.



In Warsaw, a city of a million, the Ministry of Culture received requests for half-a-million tickets. Tel-Aviv went just plain "crazy"—in the bebop sense of the word. It was difficult for any member of the cast to pay so much as a taxi fare and the crowds clustered outside striving to hear this music through the cracks in the doors were greater than the crowds inside. In Stalinogrod (the former Katowice) I myself saw the police and fire departments violate all their own fire rules by placing kitchen chairs in the aisles, in front of all exits and in all available open spaces so that they and their families might see the show, too. The crowd trying to watch from backstage was so great that the performances had to be held up repeatedly to give the stage hands room to work. In Leningrad, in Moscow, in Prague, ovations proved that rarest of all rules, the one that has no exception. Nowhere around the globe and at no time did the show meet a rebuff from an audience.

Vishinsky saw it in 1953 when it was playing at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York and said to Breen, "Why not bring it to Moscow?" (The incident is important to note. Here was the first sign of a change in the line that had made anybody behind the Iron Curtain who talked to an American or liked American music suspect as an enemy of the people.) Breen was immediately interested. Washington said, "Fine, get an invitation and we'll give you permission." Moscow said, "Get permission and we'll give you an invitation." It went on for two years. That was how long it took the Russians to implement the change of line they had decided on in 1953.

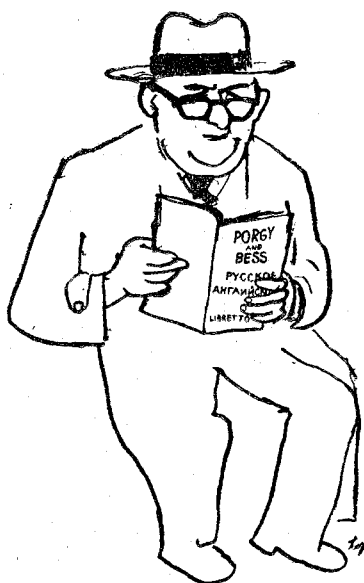
Then, after matters had seemingly been settled, the Russians suddenly became recalcitrant about "cultural relations" at Geneva and the Opera-

tions Coordinating Board, after having encouraged Breen to negotiate, suddenly decided it could not afford to underwrite a *Porgy and Bess* tour of the Iron Curtain countries.

The day the news came, Mrs. Breen was in Moscow struggling over the details of the projected tour. The Everyman Opera Company, the non-profit producing organization, had made non-profits in spades. Despite government underwriting, it was already in the hole for \$109,000 to Blevins Davis, its chief endower, and owed an additional \$125,000 in other as yet unpaid bills. Under the best terms that could be had, the show would lose an average of \$4,000 a week while touring behind the Iron Curtain. Breen decided to go ahead anyway and take the loss.

I asked him why. "I thought it was something America ought to do," he replied. It seems Americans are their government in a way that Communists just don't understand. It seems also that American capitalists are terrific gamblers. Nobody could guarantee that *Porgy and Bess* would not be a fiasco before Russian audiences. As it turned out, it wasn't. Its history-making tour and the publicity that resulted were instrumental in raising the movie price of *Porgy and Bess* from the mere thousands offered at first to the even \$1,000,000 it was sold for recently. Its slice of the sale must have taken some of the sting out of the non-profit feature of the Everyman Opera Company's operations.

DURING the ten weeks in which I toured with the show behind the Iron Curtain, I learned what other visitors have learned before me: the people there know as little about our life as we know about life on Mars. They are convinced, of course, that American capitalism is completely reactionary and that all it is creating for us is increasing domination and exploitation by the ruling class and increasing impoverishment of the working class. The former First Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Washington insisted to me he had seen with his own eyes great and growing poverty all over the United States during his travels around this country from 1951 through 1954. Far from firing him for such reports, the Kremlin promoted him to the high-ranking job



of deputy chief of the Foreign Section of the Ministry of Culture. Perhaps that was why he had made such reports in the first place—to tell his bosses what they wanted to believe and get promoted.

But in any case such circumstances put *Porgy and Bess* in the position of being loaded for bear—Russian bear.

In Communist lands, Negroes are usually referred to as America's "slave laborers." On its face, *Porgy and Bess* supports the charge. It tells a tragic story about illiterate Negroes who, a mere thirty years ago, were living in a Charleston alley in a manner very little improved over that of their savage ancestors a century before in an African jungle clearing. The white life all around them was a jungle in which they lived to prey and be preyed upon.

But now, thirty years later, this story is acted out by representatives of the same people who rose up out of the life it depicts. Under America's "reactionary ruling circles," they have fought their way up in a single generation to acquire cultured backgrounds, to become professionals whose acting talents and rich operatic voices have been trained superbly in the finest conservatories and colleges.

RUSSIANS are quite used by now to seeing descendants of peasants and proletarians act out the brutal life of their ancestors under the Czars. It gives them the warm, comforting and quite realistic feeling that they are getting somewhere under their system. But from *Porgy and Bess* they learned for the first time that

we must be getting somewhere, too, under our system.

But they learned, also, that we're getting somewhere they haven't even been headed for. The Russian theatre, crammed by creators whose energies were liberated in a revolution, startled the world in the twenties. It has made no progress since then. Under the smother of state control, their writers haven't had a new view of life since Karl Marx stopped writing. But the American theatre has. Technically, the staging of *Porgy and Bess* under Breen's direction represents a revolutionary and mind-opening advance. It's no longer anything very new for America but Western Europe had never witnessed anything like it and the Communists had never heard of it.

I remember going home from a party one night in Prague with the composer of a new opera that was about to go into rehearsal. He had just seen *Porgy and Bess* and was so excited, ideas were coming to him so rapidly, he could hardly speak coherently. He was stopping rehearsals at once to plan a whole new production and he was so full of thoughts about it that he couldn't take time to finish expressing one of them before starting on another. Communist audiences in general were stunned. Who was the reactionary force here—"progressive" Russia or "reactionary" America?

BUT what hit even harder was the fact that our "reactionary ruling circles" are willing now to send "slave laborers" abroad as ambassadors to act out their own past and show how much it has changed. "Do you realize how impossible it has been to get any word of truth about America into this country?" a Western diplomat asked me in Moscow. But *Porgy and Bess* did it. It did it because it is not propaganda about the truth; it is itself truth.

In our embassies in Moscow, Warsaw and Prague, men were assigned to study the effect of the show on the population and write reports to Washington. It's an effect that does not reveal itself directly or immediately. If it is anything, it is a long-lasting ferment that expresses itself most importantly in oblique fashion. But here in sum are my impressions:

In Russia, where communism is solidly entrenched, it stirred up gloom over the stagnation of the So-

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viet theatre and released in a jubilant rush the enormous reservoir of good will that America has built up there ever since the Czarist days when we were for all Russians. In Poland and Czechoslovakia, where the Russians are hated almost but not quite as much as the Germans are feared, and where communism itself has almost no popular support, the show stirred up such a hunger for the West and the dignity of its life as to make many people with whom I spoke weep.

A new set of foreign relationships is in the process of development. A policy that involves "containment"

and "massive retaliation" and "unleashings" and "brinks" and "don't shake your fist at a Russian" and all the rest of it is withering on the vine. For the hydrogen bomb, having made that climactic war between communism and capitalism impractical, is now in the slow but blissful process of making it unthinkable.

One of the factors impeding that process is the commonly held American opinion that Soviet Russia is not a nation but a melodrama in a horror comics book. So I was informed by the leading Russian expert in our State Department. But public opinion governs Russia, too.

And their opinion of us, while deriving not from horror comics but from Marx, is quite unrealistically horrible, too. For the Russian mind has not yet learned to see any difference between the American capitalist society and that of nineteenth-century Europe.

That is where "cultural relations" come in. *Porgy and Bess* is what that phrase ought to mean to us—a show, a show of our warmth, our vitality, our artifice and our art. What is America that it should be loved by all mankind and its power feared by none? Who can say better than our artists?

LEGER: ARTIST AND MAN

The Tender Realist . . . by John Berger

London

THE DEATH of Léger last August prompted very little comment in this country or, I gather, in the United States. He was accorded his due as one of the obvious leaders of the modern movement—but that was all. There was no suggestion that a great man, in the class of Schweitzer, Einstein, Chaplin, was being mourned. Only an original but rather mechanical painter had died.

In France it was very different. Men in every kind of position paid their respects. This might be explained by different national conventions. But what emerged from all these French tributes—and has never been properly realized elsewhere—was the warmth, the affection and unpretentiousness for which Léger as a man and artist stood in contemporary European culture. Almost every article about him emphasized this. Maurice Jardot in the *Lettres Françaises* wrote: "A few minutes before his death Léger said to his great friend Banquier, 'C'est dur'. One is glad that he was able to know how hard it was for us, also, to lose him." If one had read the French obituaries and had never seen Léger's work or known that he was a painter,

one might have thought that a great mountaineer or explorer had died—somebody whose actions had made him loved over and above all differences of opinion.

The explanation of this is that Léger was the simplest of all modern artists, and yet never naive. To understand how this was so is to define his true and marvellous greatness. He was simple but not naive because he discovered a mythology into which he could fit all his experiences immediately and directly. He did not, like Picasso, have to struggle to discover a new meaning in every new event; nor, like Braque, did he avoid the problem altogether by destroying meaning; he saw everything in its appointed place, and like all religious artists, all his paintings really celebrate the same thing.

It may seem odd to call Léger a religious artist, for it is difficult to imagine a mind less metaphysical than his, and philosophically he was a materialist and a Marxist. Yet instinctively he felt the connection between faith and technology. Man has always created gods to inhabit those forces over which he himself has had no power. As he has extended his knowledge and ability to control his environment, so his gods have receded. With the invention of machine production his control be-

came complete—not actually so, but in theory. A world of security and plenty was no longer a dream or a priest's promise; it became a practical possibility. Yet as soon as this happened a crisis occurred for, with the old mythologies destroyed, men were in danger of being left faithless without anything outside themselves to challenge them, without any sense of poetry to inspire them. Léger was one of the first artists to realize that this consequence was a false one and that the machine, with its practical promise of equality and its condition that men should cooperate together in labor and achievement, contained within itself a new spirit of poetry and nobility.

Obviously to describe such a complicated historical process in one paragraph, I have had to simplify and it may seem that I am confirming a charge frequently levelled against Léger: that he was an impersonal artist who worshipped the machine and turned his figures into robots. Nothing could be further from the truth. But before showing why he was not an impersonal artist, it is worthwhile asking why Léger, who as I have said, was the simplest of painters, is so frequently misunderstood and underrated.

As a man and in his work he stands in absolute opposition to the

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currently fashionable idea of what constitutes genius. He was confident and gay instead of being tortured. His sensibility, his "taste," was something which controlled his work when once it was under way; it was never a starting point. His intentions were heroic—that is to say he celebrated those facts and ideas which could speak for the majority in his society; he did not celebrate the idiosyncrasies of the individual. He rejected every implication of "glamour." "Glamour," as it has now come to be understood, stands for everything that separates one person from another—whether it is their "special" understanding of art or the color of their lipstick; Léger was only concerned with what we have in common. The current vision of the genius is almost synonymous with that of the mysterious, misunderstood outcast; Léger's vision of genius was of a man with an imagination so in tune with his time and therefore so easily understandable that he could become almost anonymous. Even in conversation he rarely used the word "I."

BUT NOW, leaving aside the question of Léger's present reputation, how do his works themselves refute the charge that he was mechanical, that he merely worshipped the machine for its own sake? The most straightforward reply would be to say: Look at them. Look at his bicycles, and his tattooed biceps, and his holiday straw hats, and his cows with their comic camouflage dapples, and his steeplejacks and acrobats each knowing what the other takes, and his trees like the sprigs you put into a jam jar, and his machinery as gay as a motorbike to a boy, and his nudes as familiar as wives—what other modern painter doesn't paint a nude as though she were either a piece of studio furniture or a surreptitious mistress?—and his compasses and wheels painted as if they were emblems on flags to celebrate their usefulness—does his work *seem* mechanical and cold?

But if one must analyze further, one can. First, it is necessary to distinguish between two parallel but separate elements in Léger's art: his admiration for the machine or the machine-made product and his actual process of drawing and painting. He is often accused of *working* mechanically. In his studio his palette

had a few huge mounds of pure color on it—the familiar Léger colors: a blanket red, a pure blue, golden yellow, etc. These he used direct and pure on many different canvases just as he used the same even, dark outline for girders, women and flowers. He worked according to a formula. But that is not the same thing as saying that he worked mechanically. To have a formula is only to have a consistent style because you have as consistent a view of life as Mantegna or Veronese or Rubens had. His style was based on two principles. First, I think he wanted every figure or object he painted to be entirely unambiguous. The fact of its existence which its noun describes—*tree, hand, chair*—had to be made more important than any possible attitude one might have toward its existence. One could argue that this would lead to the most literal naturalism. Yet, if it did, it would lose its point, for then the painting would attract attention away from the original object: "Look! I really thought *it* [the painting] was real!" The method Léger found for emphasizing the primacy of the objects he painted was to simplify them both in mass and outline: thus, he created a series of visual "signs" which although three-dimensional, carry their meaning as clearly as road signs or the lover's hearts carved on tree trunks.

If this first principle of Léger's style was the result of his respect for the objects he painted, the second principle was the result of his enthusiasm for them. He wanted all his pictures to communicate the pleasure, the vitality he found in what he painted. Since he was a visual artist, this pleasure had to be communicated by means of the color, design, strength and sturdiness with which the elements of the painting were fitted together.

Although completely contemporary, Léger painted as a popular singer, a bard, might sing. His images, his words, were simple but his method of painting, of presentation, gave to this simplicity a depth and lyricism which could stand in for all the complications of the heart. Despite the enormous differences, there is common ground between Léger and Burns.

This brings us to another misinterpretation of Léger: the idea that, if he was not mechanical, he was anyway a Utopian dreamer. A well-

known British critic, discussing Léger, recently wrote: "His figures move solemnly and somnolently as in a dream, a dream found in the real world: the real and the ideal are fused into one in a world where man is stately and innocent and illiterate (the noble savage in a cloth cap) and all opposites are reconciled in the atmosphere of an earthly Paradise." Apart from the cheap sophistication of the sneer at "the noble savage in a cloth cap," this remark betrays the critic's blindness to one of Léger's most remarkable qualities: his tenderness.

LET ME explain what I mean by that. It is true that Léger saw the machine as a means of achieving a world of justice and plenty. And it is true that in his choice of subject matter and in his method of painting, he expressed the buoyancy and hope of this vision. But his world was far removed from the perfect vacuum of a Utopia. He always recognized human vulnerability and in his fullest optimism allowed for this by the tenderness of gesture and mood in his figures. In a Utopia there might be gaiety and cooperation and happiness but there would be no need for tenderness, for tenderness is the result of understanding human weakness. His *Constructeurs* do not only build together: they also protect one another—as, in practice, men working on high scaffolding must. His portrait of Eluard shows all the doubting that a lyrical poet must undergo. In one of his last canvases, called *Maternité*, the typical bands of bright color set the drawing flying, as gay as a tricolor, but the daughter's hand touches her mother's cheek with the necessary reassurance that children can give. Such tenderness is remarkable because it is not a quality one usually finds in a classical artist. It is this combination which allowed Léger, alone among his contemporaries, to evolve a style from which a tradition can spring. His classicism has brought order and method to the problems of teaching and apprenticeship applied to modern subjects, and to modern conceptions of space and light in architecture; and at the same time his spirit has proved that this order need become neither cold nor academic. Léger belongs to the future in which he believed so ardently.

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BOOKS AND THE ARTS

A Brilliant Spectacle Unfolds

A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLES. Vol. 1, The Birth of Britain. By Winston Churchill. Dodd, Mead and Company. \$6.

By James R. Newman

A BRITISH bookseller's catalogue on my desk conveys the information that Sir Winston L. S. Churchill has written twenty-three books (thirty-seven volumes, half-blue morocco, £235). The first, published in 1898, is *Story of Malakand Field Force*; his novel, *Savrola*, appeared in 1900; there followed multi-volume histories and ancestral biographies, fragments of autobiography, political reflections, collections of speeches, and even a *jeu d'esprit*, *Painting as a Pastime*. Now we have the first installment of his twenty-fourth work, a history which when complete will occupy four volumes. Sir Winston, it appears, is not tired and we as readers are not tired of him.

The history, he tells us, was begun twenty years ago. Half a million words were delivered to his publisher at the outbreak of the war. Then for some years other business occupied him, and when it had loosed its grip the war memoirs laid claim on his pen. All the while "the book slumbered peacefully." And it is "only now when things have quietened down that I present to the public *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*."

This first volume begins with the Roman conquest of Britain and carries forward the story to 1485, when that "wise, sad, careful monarch," the first of the Tudors, King Henry VI, ascended the throne. It is a train of centuries, a motley of men and events made to order for Churchill. The color and dimensions, the crimes and misfortunes, the berserker warriors, monsters, fools and heroes, the bloody rages, battles and plots, the royal murders, the march

of Britain from a colony to imperialism—all these suit his temperament and his skill as a chronicler.

From the opening lines he is the impeccable performer: "In the summer of the Roman year 699, now described as the year 55 before the birth of Christ, the Proconsul of Gaul, Gaius Julius Caesar, turned his gaze upon Britain. In the midst of his wars in Germany and in Gaul he became conscious of this heavy Island which stirred his ambitions and already obstructed his designs." In a recent reassessment of *The World Crisis*, John Raymond wrote that Churchill is never so eloquent as when he recounts the "vast night-mare transactions of human flesh" in which he participated as director of grand stratagems and maker of decisions. It is true of this book that among its most memorable passages are those which describe the great campaigns and battles—Crécy, Agincourt, Bannockburn, the Wars of the Roses, the conquests of Edward III, the victories of the long bow. But Churchill is of course more than a superb military historian. He has written a broad, sweeping account of political struggles, as well as wars and the fluctuating fortunes of dynasties. Essentially his method is to draw separate portraits of leading men and critical events and to string them together chronologically. The continuity of historical principles, the evolution of political forms and institutions are less distinct. A brilliant spectacle unfolds, but not a full-bodied record.

THE *History* does not pretend to be a scholarly book. Churchill has evidently drawn heavily on the works and advice of professional historians and has himself contributed few fresh interpretations. His aim has been to present a "personal view on the processes whereby English-speaking peoples have achieved their distinctive position and character." He writes of the British past with a profound—perhaps at times too profound—sense of identification. He glows over heroes; he is magnanimous to worthy foes and forgiving

to weaklings; he is unsparing of cowards, braggarts and treacherous men. Of those guilty of "unnatural vices" he can scarcely bring himself to speak.

The felicities of style and the play of wit are perhaps no match for Gibbon, but where else in modern histories is their equal to be found? The reviewer must not be denied the delight of displaying samples: About 400 B. C.

men armed with iron entered Britain from the Continent and killed the men of bronze. At this point we can plainly recognize across the vanished milleniums a fellow-being. A biped capable of slaying another with iron is evidently to modern eyes a man and a brother. It cannot be doubted that for smashing skulls, whether long-headed or round, iron is best.

The picture of the Vikings' famous long-ship, which bore them to the plunder of the civilized world,

rises before us vivid and bright: the finely carved, dragon-shaped prow; the high curving stern; the long row of shields, black and yellow alternately, ranged along the sides; the gleam of steel; the scent of murder.

When Henry Platenet

saw in the list of the conspirators against him the name of his son John, upon whom his affection had strangely rested, he abandoned the struggle with life. "Let things go as they will," he gasped. "Shame, shame on a conquered King." So saying, this hard, violent, brilliant and lonely man expired at Chinon on July 6, 1189. The pious were taught to regard this melancholy end as the further chastisement of God upon the murderer of Thomas Becket. Such is the bitter taste of worldly power. Such are the correctives of glory.

And no one has more succinctly described the advent of gunpowder and the fading of the archer and the armored man:

Amid jarring booms and billowing smoke which frequently caused more alarm to friends than foes, but none the less arrested all attention, a system which had ruled and also guided Christendom for five hundred years, which had in its day been the instrument of an immense advance in human government and stature, fell into ruins which were painfully carted away to make room for new building.

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Even the miniatures are superb. Throughout medieval history war with France "groped and scraped into every reach of English life"; Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, a solid, practical, brave, faithful man was "if not an architect of our Constitution, at least a punctual and unfailing Clerk of the Works"; Edward II, a "perverted weakling" preferred "thatching and ditching" to wars or tournaments; Edward I warred in France with "piebald fortune"; Edward III's costly siege of Calais made Parliament "morose in demeanor and reluctant in supply"; "a whole generation [was] slashed through by a hideous severance"—the Black Death; "ghoulish practices glare at us from the broken annals"; the record of the Black Prince is "dinked by many cruel acts of war"; and of the Wars of the Roses: no conflict "has been preserved with characters at once so worldly and so expensively chiselled."

THERE are many histories of Britain and it may be asked with which of them Churchill's can be compared. It comes perhaps closest to John Green's four-volume *Short History of the English People*, first published in 1874. Green's book stands out, as does Churchill's, for its literary grace; as a history it is uneven. Even so, it is far more comprehensive than the present work. The shortcomings of Churchill's treatment are those for which his earlier works have prepared us. Always he has written from his experience in command; and now his coordinating eye selects and arranges the pageant-worthy events of the past. His account is based on chronicles rather than on records; as such, it is missing essential vertebrae. Of social history Churchill tells us next to nothing. Plain men appear only in battles. They are the "rank and file," the "submerged classes," the "humble masses," the "common people." They have no history. And the "thrifty burgess" is not much better served. If you wish to know how Englishmen lived under Henry II, say, you will find more information in a few pages of Trevelyan's one-volume *History of England* than in all of Sir Winston's book.

English literature, scientific thought and intellectual activities are not touched upon. The effect is not considered of fundamental eco-

nomie factors such as the rise and fall of wages and prices, the uses of money, foreign trade, the power of the guilds. A chapter is allotted to the Common Law, but Churchill is not conspicuously successful in summarizing the growth of this fascinating and complex institution. Nor is his discussion of Magna Carta, though it is a corrective of myths, a model of historical penetration.

HISTORY is what historians write. The past does not change; different interpreters merely have different prejudices. Churchill is a dramatist and a bard. His figures are not cardboard but they are rooted in myth. Modern historians are rather nervous about King Arthur. The evidence for his existence is slim. Lord Raglan has no doubt he was a creature of fable; others regard it as "reasonably certain" that a "petty chieftain" by this name once existed in South Wales. Churchill has no patience with pedants and skeptics. The "fiction-loving Europe" of the twelfth century delighted in Geoffrey of Monmouth's stories about Arthur and so does Churchill. "It is all true," he says, "or it ought to be; and more and better besides." Queen Eleanor, wife of Henry II, is the subject of a tragic tale, in which she penetrated the "protecting maze at Woodstock by the clue of a silken thread" and offered her husband's

mistress, the "Fair Rosamond" the "hard choice between the dagger and the poisoned cup." "Tiresome investigators," writes Churchill, "have undermined this excellent tale, but it certainly should find its place in any history worthy of the name." These are among the legends from which Englishmen have for centuries drawn delight and inspiration. The legends are part of a racial memory. That it may be a memory of things which never happened is in a sense irrelevant. What counts is what men believe. Addressing himself to the English-speaking people in a dismal age (it makes no difference whether these passages were written in 1939 or 1954), Churchill seeks to fortify them with glorious fables of "trials and tribulations," as well as with facts. It is the sort of history which stirs and evokes more than it enlightens; it will appeal more to the moist than to the sharp eye.

But it is the sort of history which in one way or another must appeal to everyone. It is the intensely personal expression of an admirable man. It has, as Guedalla tells us Arnold wrote of the *Iliad*, "a great master's genuine stamp, and that stamp is the grand style." Whatever professional historians may say of this book, it will not grow cold on the shelves. This is as it should be; and more and better besides.

Mutability in Modern Poetry

THE METAPHORIC TRADITION IN MODERN POETRY.

By Sister M. Bernetta Quinn. Rutgers University Press. \$4.50.

By John R. Willingham

THE MODERN POET has complained characteristically that the life of our times is so fragmentary, so paradoxical, so meaningless even, that he has to resort to nimble leaps of meaning, imagery and manner, in order to say anything at all worth saying. He sometimes has made supercilious, if partially deserved, comments about the ineptness at reading or imagination of the average man in our society.

On the other hand, the public

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(with the aid of the traditionalist poets and critics) has complained, just as characteristically and as emphatically, that sudden shifts in direction, in meaning and in metaphor, without warning signals or prose glosses, render the work of the typical modern poet unintelligible and thus unrelated to "real life." A spate of books and articles has appeared to show that "meaning" is present in modern poetry and that intelligibility can be dredged out of modern poems by following a certain approved method of examining structure, texture, tension, etc. But even an earnest, cooperative reader frequently finds himself more frustrated and more irritated by the critics than by the poets: the explicators too often need explication.

Sister Bernetta's book occupies a position quite superior to that of

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the typical critical examination of recent American and English poets. For one thing, she has successfully resisted any temptation to conceal her ideas behind a glittering but impenetrable facade of critical jargon. Acknowledging from the outset that there are many significant thematic angles of vision and structural methods from whose standpoint one might profitably examine the major poetry of our time, Sister Bernetta has chosen one of the most pervasive (if less understood heretofore) and most revealing (because so richly inclusive) approaches—the idea and device of metamorphosis. More than mere source of informing idea or structural imagery, metamorphosis is shown to be especially attractive to the poet who seeks a valid expression for his consciousness of the diffusion and mutability of his world. In longer poems of the last thirty-five years (poems of semi-epic intentions, in some cases), such as “The Waste Land,” “Paterson,” or “The Bridge,” the metamorphoses of protagonists, major symbols and ancient legends become of critical importance; such meaningful change without loss of radical identity permits a suitably complex ordering of vision and its resulting myths, which of course make possible the life of poetry.

POUND indicated that his predilection for metamorphosis sprang from his admiring study of Ovid. And Eliot's classical scholarship may very well have suggested to him the obvious benefits of the metamorphic plan and idea. With William Carlos Williams or Hart Crane, the idea seems to have been more a natural response to the requirements of a complex subject matter and the need of an organic poetic manner. In the case of Crane's long poem, “The Bridge,” (more and more thought of as the single greatest poem of the twentieth century), the orientation is not really (as Sister Bernetta insists) Christian: any earlier religious system is transcended in the symbolism of the bridge, and the many metamorphoses of time and space are more closely related to the burden of such prose works as Williams' “In the American Grain” or Waldo Frank's “Our America,” both of which must be carefully studied if one wishes to get at the sources of Crane's imagery and ideas.

The entire book will be of real interest to the serious reader of modern poetry. Perhaps the sections on Eliot and Yeats will seem less strikingly fresh than the other portions, but the chapter on Williams' “Paterson” furnishes the most valuable commentary on that “testament of perpetual change” yet to appear. Another rewarding bit is the chapter on Randall Jarrell—a poet younger than the others involved in this study (Yeats, Wallace Stevens, Pound,

Eliot, Crane and Williams) but considered by some critics (including Sister Bernetta) to be a likely candidate to achieve the accolade of “major poet.” The effect of the entire book ought to help dispel the aura of whimsicality so often attributed to our more successful poets and to suggest that abrupt transitions and transmutations in a modern poem may not be so much mere wilful artistic perversity as meaningful change or metamorphosis.

New Mexico Mine Town

OUT OF THE DUST. By Lars Lawrence. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$4.50.

By Josephine Herbst

A PROFILE of an American town can be a *Main Street* or it can be *Out of the Dust*, the second volume of a trilogy by Lars Lawrence. The story of Reata, coal-mining town of New Mexico, is infinitely the more complex not only because its people are the unmelted elements of a racial melting pot but because the situation is dynamite. On one level the story is a whodunit. Its swift narrative is pinned down by the back-alley killing of the sheriff as he emerges from the courtroom with two miners who are being railroaded to jail. The initial cause of the fracas, dispossession of a miner and his family from their home, is lost in the proliferating efforts of a handful of people to hold out for their basic rights. Reata, a little oligarchy of local monopolies backed by armed forces, casts its shadow into every home. Though the timing of this story is the thirties, its underlying causations are topical.

Frank Hogarth, brought in from California to defend the fifty miners rounded up in expiation of the sheriff's death and jailed in the death row of the penitentiary, arrives with the debonair confidence of a labor lawyer who has won his cases. But the situation in Reata is double-barreled against him; even his own past vibrates with nervous

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tensions. Though he represents the power of the law he must operate in a community given over to the might of the lawless. Only the solidarity of the miners, tenaciously loyal to each other and their purpose, offers hope. The story of this little band is the real story of *Out of the Dust*. Like Gorki, Lawrence has a special gift for bringing to life the dispossessed. His miners, their wives, children and animals, are real. It is their “little stories” which make this powerfully written novel compelling reading. The town tangles around their confident hope in nothing more than the strength of their togetherness. In the great web, few of the townspeople dare sympathize with the embattled, who, elevated by a vision, appear like some little band of early Christians, scheming how *not* to be martyrs.

THE reader may quarrel with their vision, even think their “way out” a kind of booby trap, but I think no one can quarrel with the basic righteousness of their cause. Of mixed blood, Spanish, Mexican, Indian, white and colored, the common ingredient among them is their insistence on their own right to dignity. Though inhumanity is foisted upon them, it also dyes the powerful who would benefit by their degradation. But in trying to awaken a realization of the cruelties suffered by the underdogs, Lawrence has perhaps lost a point of contact with his reader by painting his “other” people too uniformly black. Perhaps what is needed is a *Pierre* of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* as interpreter but instead we get Tia Priscilla, a fine character, but old and tinged with insanity. Why insanity? Does Lawrence's pessimism want to persuade us that

goodness in the camp of the "others" must be accompanied by some such fatal weakness as must invalidate it? As it is not possible for the reader

to identify himself totally with the fate of the underdogs, Tia Priscilla must be the link and, too ironically, she is made this half-mad woman.

Selected New Books

East Asia

THE UNITED STATES AND ASIA.

By Lawrence H. Battistini. Frederick A. Praeger. \$5. Battistini offers an introduction to American-Asian relations—a broad subject of many facets. After a somewhat diffuse beginning, he succeeds in packing a lot of useful primary information into small compass. His work is best on past history for which the basic facts are generally well established, and on Japan (where his Asian experience has been largely concentrated). He discloses shortcomings as regards Russian Far Eastern politics, and is weak in respect to wartime and post-war developments in China.

JAPAN'S MODERN CENTURY.

By Hugh Borton. The Ronald Press. \$7. Dr. Borton, Professor of Japanese and Director of the East Asian Institute at Columbia University, speaks with a rare authority on Japan. Here he sets forth, with careful scholarship, much little-known material regarding the whole process of renaissance that followed Japan's forced entry into the world community in the mid-nineteenth century, the meteoric rise of the Japanese Empire through wars with China and Russia and World War I, and its plummeting down in World War II to its present crippled condition. This is an enlightening study in East Asian geopolitics; and if the author does not attempt to sketch Japan's future, his presentation of this integral segment of Asia's history is of outstanding value as background for any assessment of the current balance of power in East Asia.

KOREA TOMORROW.

By Kyung Cho Chung. With prefatory note by General Mark W. Clark and foreword by Dr. Paul F. Douglass. The Macmillan Company. \$5.95. This book attempts to cover the historical, economic and social Korean scene, but it is poorly constructed and often repetitious; most of the economic statistics are for the pre-Korean War period and of little value today. The author stresses two major themes (1) although South Korea has already received no little aid for its post-war rehabilitation, it needs much more—"world-wide as-

sistance"—for years to come (but there is no suggestion that Seoul's 660,000-man army is an out-size charge on the economy); and (2) because of its strategic position, Korea has become a pawn in power politics. This work fails to associate Korea, past and present, accurately to its environment, Northeast Asia, and consequently fails to show the true difficulty of realizing the aspiration voiced by its author—"a free and unified Korea."

NATIONALISM AND REVOLUTION IN MONGOLIA.

By Owen Lattimore. Oxford University Press, under auspices of Institute of Pacific Relations. \$4.75. Against a historical background made up of Manchu rule, Tsarist Russian ambitions and Mongol nationalism, Lattimore focuses attention on the 1921-51 events that brought consolidation of Soviet influence in Outer Mongolia. He calls the process "satellite politics," and holds that the Mongolian People's Republic (Outer Mongolia) is significant for revolution in Asia as "the pilot model of the contemporary Soviet satellite state." Half of this thin volume comprises a translation (jointly with Urgunge Onon)

of Nachukdorji's "Life of Sukebatur"—Communist gospel, when published in 1943, establishing Sukebatur's leading role in the creation of the Mongolian People's Republic. Nachukdorji's basic theme that Sukebatur "well understood that the fate and destiny of the Mongol common people were inseparably linked with this Great [Russian] October Revolution" might now, however, be deemed out of date—for in 1952 Outer Mongolia resumed relations with China. Lattimore's work is not projected into the post-1952 period, when radical changes have occurred in respect to both Communist "international centralism" and Soviet strategy in Asia. But Outer Mongolia's shifting role itself points up the significance of that author's observation that "Mongol politics are not an exotic study."

PARIS TO PEKING.

By Joseph R. Starobin. Cameron Associates. \$3.75. Starobin, a former Daily Worker editor, traces his journeying to China via Paris, Berlin, Moscow. His China chronicle suggests the massive and purposeful character of the revolution in course, but it lacks the historical depth and broad perspective to bring out that revolution's full significance. And if Starobin sympathetically reflects sunny sectors of the Chinese scene, he neglects to provide a mirror ample to reveal the pain. It is no holiday task, in a nation of congenital individualists, to bring about "a synthesis of the individual and the cooperative welfare." O. EDMUND CLUBB

Art

A. L. Chanin

SPAIN was barren of significant art from Goya to Picasso. Then, Miro, Gris and—despite his unevenness—Dali contributed to the place of their native land in modern art. Now still another important Spanish name emerges, that of Julio Gonzales, pioneer sculptor in metal, who was born in Barcelona in 1876, and died near Paris in 1942. The impressive retrospective held recently at the Museum of Modern Art (at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, from May 8 to June 17) establishes Gonzales as one of the makers and shakers of modern sculpture. Audacious semi-abstractions in iron rank Gonzales as the prime influence behind a good deal of the best of recent sculpture here and in Europe.

Gonzales' father and brother were master metal craftsmen, and as far back as 1893 his metal work had been exhibited at the Columbian Exhibition in Chicago. But he was a painter then and he continued to concentrate on painting, both in Spain and in Paris, where he settled in 1900. It was not until the mid-1920's that this gifted sculptor reverted to his true medium. The style by which he is now known evolved as late as 1930, when he gave his life-long friend, Picasso, technical assistance in making welded-iron sculpture constructions. Thus the power and originality of Gonzales' art is the result of the last dozen years of his life.

Traditional sculpture is a solid

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volume displacing space. With Gonzales, (as with Gabo in his constructivist sculpture) air and space combine and intermingle with graceful linear forms into a subtle balance of voids and forms. His imaginative, adventurous designs blend the drama of abstract shapes with echoes and transformations of representational images. In his finest pieces—*Woman With a Basket*, 1931; *The Angel*, 1933; *Figure Called the Giraffe*, 1934; *Woman Combing her Hair*, 1936 (a persistent Gonzales theme) he evokes a variety of responses: austere dignity, delicacy and grace, or grim, pain-tinged humor, as in the *Cactus Man*, 1939-40. One of the most extraordinary figures of his entire career is representational: the majestic peasant woman and child of 1936-37, called *The Montserrat*. An embodiment of the Spanish Republic, it was shown at the Spanish pavilion of the 1937 Paris exposition, along with Picasso's anguished mural, *Guernica*.

A RESERVED, withdrawn man, Gonzales knew only modest recognition. Most of his sculpture was unsold, and is loaned to the retrospective exhibition by his daughter. On the other hand, the Oregon-born Morris Graves, though as withdrawn as Gonzales, has not missed a solid success.

Of the seventy-five paintings and twenty-six drawings in his exhibition, recently at the Whitney Museum, and currently on view at the Phillips Gallery, Washington, D. C. (thereafter Boston; Des Moines; San Francisco; Los Angeles; La Jolla; Seattle;) scarcely one is without an appreciate owner, duly tagged with the labels of other museums and important private collectors. To Graves, now forty-six, recognition came as early as 1939, when his work was noticed in a Washington Federal Arts Project show. Frederick S. Wight has said, in a monograph on the painter, "Graves had hardly been ready for discovery when he was discovered." Acclaim has not flagged, but neither has Graves's ability to sustain and expand earlier concepts.

Like his friend, the West Coast abstractionist Mark Tobey, Graves is a mystic, who brings together aspects of Oriental and Western form and content.

From the East, Graves absorbs the

love of involved, delicate textural effects, an elaborate tracery of fragile, mesh-like lines, simplicity of mass and drawing, and above all, the brooding, meditative, Eastern vision. Birds, trees, waves or sky become cosmic symbols and personal expressions. Here, Ryder may come to mind, but Ryder is Western in sweep and force and virility.

From the West, Graves absorbs a depth and solidity of color, and something of the eye-catching appeal of semi-abstract and expressionist devices of composition. But the two traditions merge into an individual, not derivative, expression, and the best of Graves contains the shock of true originality.

Recurrent images of birds, snakes, symbolic chalices, fish forms and the sway of sea are the visual elements Graves portrays, but only to by-pass

physical phenomena and awaken the inner eye.

The best paintings are so effectively felt and projected that they become memorable in their combined lure for the eye and mind. There is nothing in them of the all-too-common display of clever technique and glib, hackneyed symbols. *Sea, Fish and Constellation*, 1944; *Outer and Mental Space*, 1943; or *Moon Mad Crow in the Surf*, 1943; or his earlier *Blind Bird in the Moonlight* sequences are, literally, spellbinding. The mystic-romantic vision in painting runs into the danger of thinness and repetitiousness. It is a viewpoint not easily varied in a large production, and the measure of Graves's sensitivity and talent is that he finds, again and again, resourceful ways by which to compose his eerie, lyric revelations.

Shells

You pick one up along the shore.
It is empty and light and dry,
And leaves a powdery chalk on your hands.

The life that made it is gone out.
That's what is meant when people say,
"A hollow shell," "a shell of his former self,"

Failing to take into account
The vital waste in composition
With the beauty of the ruined remainder

Which is no use to anyone,
Of course, unless as decoration:
A Souvenir of Sunset Beach, etc.

Its form is only cryptically
Instructive, if at all: it winds
Like generality, from nothing to nothing

By means of nothing but itself.
It is a stairway going nowhere,
Our precious emblem of the steep ascent,
Perhaps, beginning at a point

And opening to infinity,
Or the other way, if you want it the other way.

Inside it, also, there is nothing
Except the obedient sound of waters
Beat by your Mediterranean, classic heart

In bloody tides as long as breath,
Bringing by turns the ebb and flood
Upon the ruining house of histories,

Whose whitening stones, in Africa,
Bake dry and blow away, in Athens,
In Rome, abstract and instructive as chalk

When children scrawl the blackboard full
Of wild spirals every which way,
To be erased with chalk-dust, then with water.

HOWARD NEMEROV

Music

B. H. Haggin

THE Phoenix Theatre's Sideshow No. 6, produced in association with Lincoln Kirstein, was the Gertrude Stein-Virgil Thomson opera *The Mother of Us All*, which I found as delightful and moving this time as when it was first given in 1947. On that occasion a friend exclaimed, "Now I understand: what Gertrude Stein was writing with those repetitions was opera librettos"—which I amended to "opera librettos for Virgil Thomson," since their effectiveness results largely from his unique way of setting them to music.

The words of *The Mother of Us All* have less poetic imagery and verbal music than those of *Four Saints in Three Acts*, and more rational meaning—the meaning of extended trains of thought like Jo Loiterer's explanation of how to be funny, or Susan B. Anthony's discourse on the nature of man, with its wonderful insights. But Thomson's method in setting them is the same: the music separates and differentiates the Stein repetitions, articulates them in a progression with structure and climax; by the way it places and highlights groups of words in their contexts it points up Miss Stein's surprises and irrelevances of juxtaposition; and Thomson adds equally amusing incongruities between words and music—words with little or no sense, sung to music with the style of profound import. And in all this Thomson operates with unfailing attentiveness and freshness of attack which produce, simply and artlessly, results that are witty, touching and grand.

In the taxing part of Susan B. Anthony, Shirley Emmons gave an outstanding vocal and dramatic performance; but everyone in the large cast sang and acted well; and the production effectively staged by Bill Butler and efficiently conducted by Mr. Thomson deserved more elaborate scenery and a better orchestra.

A FEW years ago a young reader wrote me about a college course in the history of music in which exactly one hour was devoted to the entire group of English madrigalists. He had spent a week of his own time on

the scores of English and Italian madrigals; and as a result, whereas his classmates' knowledge consisted of a series of composers' names in their notebooks, each with a sentence or two of description and evaluation taken down in class or copied out of a book, my correspondent had ideas and estimates derived from his hearing of the music, which led him to suspect that the descriptions and evaluations in the lecture and books had not been so derived.

Quoting Paul Henry Lang's statement in *Music in Western Civilization* that the "frightful, ragged, unvocal writing [in Gesualdo's madrigals] makes their performance by a vocal ensemble well-nigh impossible," my correspondent commented that he had found this "frightful, ragged, unvocal writing" to consist of nothing worse than an occasional augmented fourth or diminished fifth, and found support for his contention that it was singable in the fact that the ten volumes of Gesualdo's works went through twenty-five editions between 1594 and 1626. And quoting Dr. Alfred Einstein's statement in his *Short History of Music* that Gesualdo's chromaticism attained "extremes of daring . . . not based upon clear harmonic perception and hence not fully absorbed by the main stream of development," my correspondent commented that "Gesualdo's chromaticism was not based on the major-minor, tonic-dominant relationships which ultimately prevailed: why should it have been? But to claim that it is not based on clear harmonic perception is to deny the evidence of one's ears: . . . it always comes off."

Countless people who never heard a note of Gesualdo have retained from their music-history courses the statements that "his extreme chromaticism was not based upon clear harmonic perception" and "the frightful, ragged, unvocal writing in his madrigals makes their performances well-nigh impossible." But Sunset Records has issued LP-600, from which they can discover that Lang and Einstein misinformed them; and Gesualdo's madrigals can be sung, and are in fact sung beauti-

fully on this record by a group called the Singers of Ferrara under Robert Craft's direction; and that the daring, strange harmonic progressions make harmonic sense—an unusual, unpredictable sense—in every instance. In addition they will discover that the pieces are some of the most remarkable, most powerful and moving, they have ever heard. The record comes with Italian texts, English translations and excellent notes by Aldous Huxley.

The lovely Dowland songs on London International TW-91067, *Canzone Scordate* Volume 2, arranged by Dorumsgaard, are sung beautifully by the tenor Richard Lewis, but to unbearably percussive piano accompaniments by Jacqueline Bonneau. On the reverse side are some uninteresting songs by the Swedish composer Bellman, sung by Aksel Schiotz with the baritone remnant of his once fine tenor voice.

Vanguard 479, *The Three Ravens*, takes its title from the first of a number of English folksongs that are sung by the counter-tenor Alfred Deller with his subtlety of tone and inflection, to lute accompaniments by Desmond Dupré.

I can only report the fact that I found the duets by Monteverdi and Carissimi on Angel 35290 uninteresting, without being able to account for it. Schwarzkopf's and Seefried's singing of these pieces and of the melodious Moravian Duets of Dvorak is exquisite; but I think two contrasting voices would have been more effective.

Schwarzkopf, with Giesecking at the piano, also sings exquisitely a number of Mozart songs on Angel 35270, not all of which are as good as *Unglückliche Liebe*, *Abendempfindung*, *Der Zauberer*, *Das Veilchen*, *Das Lied der Trennung* and *An Chloe*. But the surprise among the ones I hadn't heard was the ironically humorous strophic song *Die Alte*, a Mozartian equivalent of what we get from Gilbert and Sullivan or one of our own American teams, and effectively pointed up by Schwarzkopf's dramatized performance.

Coming Next Week

Beatrice Webb's Diaries:
1924-1932

Reviewed by Kingsley Martin

Theatre and Films

Robert Hatch

IN THE second act of *The Most Happy Fella* (Imperial), a young man stands behind a pretty girl and, putting his arms around her to demonstrate how she is to paste labels on grape crates, repeatedly scrubs the back of his hands across her breasts. The audience is convulsed and loudly applauds these artists when their scene ends. Now what sort of adult laughs at this sorry kind of lechery and how could the producer guess that hundreds of them would buy admission to this show? How could Frank Loesser, who has written a strong, constantly interesting, often heart-rousing score and adapted Sidney Howard's *They Knew What They Wanted* most sensitively to provide himself with an appropriate and substantial book, permit this episode of cold vulgarity to mar his work?

For that matter, how can he appreciate the great vocal and dramatic skill of Robert Weede in the title role and not hear the cheap dance-band vocalist tricks in the voice of Art Lund, the romantic lead? How

can he compose dashing and witty material for his comic trio and ask Mr. Weede to address corny banalities to "mamma up in heaven"? How can a show so secure in conception suffer a succession of queasy details that douse the gaiety so artfully engendered?

Catering to the public, I think, is what does it. Big musicals are the most commercial ventures in the commercial theatre. They cost a fortune, they must take in a fortune for weeks on end and a pair of tickets to one of them (even at box-office prices) is substantial conspicuous waste. So onto a good framework the owners hang all manner of crass bait—these entrepreneurs have no respect for the taste of the affluent.

The Most Happy Fella is a show bursting with talent: Mr. Loesser; Mr. Weede; Jo Sullivan as the sweet-voiced heroine; the trio (Arthur Rubin, Rico Froehlich, John Henson); Shorty Long and Susan Johnson, the antic couple who must perform the business I mentioned earlier; Mona Paulee, who plays an

unnecessary part that seems borrowed from *The Saint of Bleecker Street*, but who has a lovely voice. The costumes, scenery, choreography are always good and occasionally excellent and the whole show goes at a rousing pace through a story which, thanks to Mr. Howard, has credibility and tenderness. A production so excellent should succeed on its own terms, not require the gloomy bad taste with which it has been embellished.

FREDERICO FELLINI, an Italian director new to us, has put together in *The White Sheik* a small but funny slapstick. It concerns the infatuation of a country bride with the Roman hero of a series of photographic romances (equivalent of our comic books). The mounting pace—everyone begins to run—and the solemn, literal absurdity recall early René Clair. Leopoldo Trieste, as the incompetently resolute bridegroom, is an ingenious comedian.

[Harold Clurman is at present in Europe.]

— TV Forecast —

May 20 through 23

(See local papers for time and channel)

Sunday, May 20

IN WHICH WE SERVE (ABC; Famous Film Festival). Noel Coward's multi-award-winning biography of a warship; first presented in 1942. The author stars in this film version, which he also directed.

THE HAT WITH THE ROSE (CBS; General Electric Theatre). Gisele MacKenzie stars in this drama with a girls' college background. The plot, centering on a pupil's ridicule of a teacher, recalls a large family of teacher-problem plays.

YOU ASKED FOR IT (ABC). Another item in this season's Titanicana; United States Coast Guard Cutter Pontchartrain, at sea in the North Atlantic, presents an on-the-spot picture of the International Ice Patrol. In addition, assorted short subjects also requested by viewers.

PURSUIT OF TRUTH (NBC; Princeton '56). Final telecast in this season's series will deal with the influence of three fields of scholarship—the humanities, the physical sciences and the natural sciences—on American life in the past fifty years. Professors Carlos H. Baker (English), Elmer G. Butler (Biology), Eric E. Goldman (History) will participate.

Wednesday, May 23

THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER MEDALS (CBS; U. S. Steel Hour). Gracie Fields and Jackie Cooper in the leads of Barrie's famous play. Adapted by Robert Anderson, author of "Tea and Sympathy."

Radio; May 20

WHY THE FUJIOR OVER FLOURIDATION? (ABC; America's Town Meeting of the Air). Program will originate from Atlantic City at the 190th Annual meeting of the New Jersey Medical Society. To flouridate or not to flouridate will be manfully discussed by a panel of scientists.

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Letters

(Continued from inside cover)

right. As a matter of fact, neither view is entirely correct.

While we hesitate to admit it, there are deep-seated trends in our American civilization towards dependency and indulgence and away from self-reliance and self-denial, stimulated possibly by the action of government during and after the depression—e.g., see the increase of relief rolls during high employment and prosperity, for one bit of evidence, and the Kinsey report for another!

As to Professor Lindesmith's second point, recent history demonstrates that mere hospitalization is no cure for a confirmed drug addict. Judged by results so far, both the fantastically expensive Brothers Island Institute in New York and the federal hospital at Lexington, Kentucky, are failures.

No profession should claim the exclusive right to treat a social malady until it has a cure for it. In the same way that the cure of drunkenness and sex deviation is a compound of socio-medical and authoritarian effort, so it is with drug addiction. Psychiatrists who have especially studied this distressing phenomenon tell us that drug addiction is not a separable disease—to be isolated and cured—but a symptom of a general psychiatric disorder applicable to alcoholics and sex deviates, too.

Free dispensing of narcotics under doctors' orders may be a necessary and human palliative but it is not a cure. The trouble lies deeper in our complex social structure.

Here are some things we might do: Insist on international conventions reducing shipment of opium; prevent smuggling by employment of more treasury inspectors; punish severely the pushers; stop whetting the appetite of some of the inquisitive young people in our less privileged areas by talking too much about a subject which 99.44 per cent of them know nothing about and care less. I sincerely question whether "A Hatful of Rain" or even "The Man with the Golden Arm" has any beneficial effect in preventing addiction. Diversion of our young people into wholesome and healthful activities is, I would guess, more effective than sending a Robert Mitchum to jail for addiction and then headlining him in the movies on his release.

SANFORD BATES

Former Director, U. S. Bureau of Prisons

Pennington, N. J.

Mr. Lindesmith's Reply

Dear Sirs: Because my discussion of

the drug problem was intended to be practical, I stressed a definite program which has been found to be effective abroad. This program, which places uncured addicts under the care of doctors, is also an attack upon the economic basis of the illegal traffic. As such, it is designed to supplement, not to replace, control measures of the type now directed against the black market which Mr. Bates mentions. Both Mr. Bates and Miss Anderson, in their concern over relatively remote historical and social factors in the drug problem about which little or nothing can be done, neglect the factor of availability of drugs about which something can be done.

I had uncured addicts in mind when I emphasized the central role of the medical profession. Only doctors can write prescriptions. It is true, as Mr. Bates says, that there is now no effective cure for addiction and that turning over uncured addicts to medical men is only a "human palliative." It is, however, a vital step which would remove the stigma of criminality from addiction, besides undercutting the illicit traffic. I am surprised that Mr. Bates seems to attach so little importance to it. Once this vital step is taken, I will concede Miss Anderson's point that curing addiction is much more than a medical problem.

If one is to judge from arrest rates, Mr. Bates is definitely in error when he says that the increase of addiction in young persons has been confined to "a few places like New York." The figures in the Uniform Crime Reports, which reveal a trend toward increasing involvement of young persons, also show rising arrest rates in almost all sections of the country and in cities of all sizes.

ALFRED R. LINDESMITH

Bloomington, Ind.

Spring Book Issue

Dear Sirs: I am very grateful to you for calling the extraordinarily fine spring book number (April 14) to my attention. It is the richest and solidest collection of literary essays and reviews to appear in any magazine this season.

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New York, N. Y.

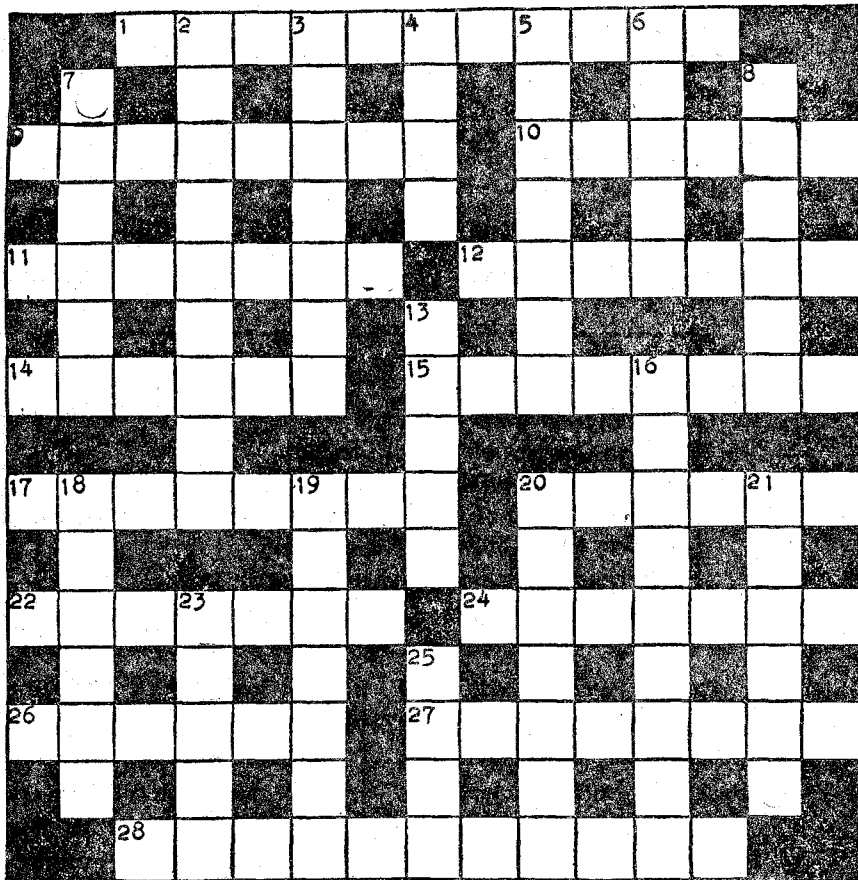
Dear Sirs: The spring book number is a triumph of some sort. It's heady pleasure to be able to read again somewhere pieces like Josephine Herbst's and May Sarton's. No yeasayer, The Nation, Dieu soit beni, in this land of yeas.

HENRY SCHUMAN

New York, N. Y.

Crossword Puzzle No. 672

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

- 1 See 12 across
- 9 Rather inadequate legislation of old England! (4,4)
- 10 Check short while traveling? It sounds like a weather impossibility, or else the end of the ruler. (4,2)
- 11 One who doesn't believe in this place? Shake! (7)
- 12 and 1 across Is mendicity the problem? Not logically! (7,3,8)
- 14 See 28 across
- 15 Deponed. (8)
- 17 and 27 across Some of us do it once each fall (to complement our annual setting-up exercise?). (4,4,3,5)
- 20 See 3 down
- 22 Stay younger longer—it's hard to put a period to such things. (7)
- 24 This makes the cat a privileged character, perhaps. (7)
- 26 Putting the color on in royalty? (6)
- 27 See 17 across
- 28 and 14 across Make a slight addition to trauma if you do. (3,6,2,6)

DOWN

- 2 Associated with Columbine. (9)
- 3 and 20 across Did Barrie's work imply a way of excellence? (7,6)
- 4 and 13 down Certainly not hard cash in Germany, but they can be touched for it. (4,5)

- 5 The punishment of people in the wrong. (7)
- 6 Go up around and beat somebody inside. (5)
- 7 Extracted from lemons, if the complications are serious. (6)
- 8 The fruit of court players, by the sound of it. (6)
- 13 See 4 down.
- 16 This might run a bad meter last. (9)
- 18 Rather important but vulgar man from Chaldea? (6)
- 19 Used in South Africa to cause 14. (7)
- 20 As a writer, Edith doesn't with everybody. (7)
- 21 Here, as the Romans say, it's in a broken set. (6)
- 23 Landed proprietor. (5)
- 25 A Revolutionary statesman comes up with nothing more than an unhealthy 20 down. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE 671

ACROSS: 1 DASHBOARDS; 6 STAY; 10 LEVERET; 11 SAILING; 12 POLISH CORRIDOR; 14 CRAWFISH; 15 UGLIER; 16 LOW MAN; 18 STAND PAT; 22 CONSERVATOIRES; 24 ENGAGED; 25 AUSPICE; 26 YO-YO. DOWN: 1 DILL PICKLE; 2 SEVILLA; 3 BIRDS OF PASSAGE; 4 ATTACKS; 5 DESERT; 7 TRIPOLI; 8 YEGG; 9 DISINGENUOUSLY; 13 BRITISHERS; 17 WRONGLY; 19 TRAVAIL; 20 PURLIEU; 21 GRADER; 23 and 27 across VERY TRULY YOURS.

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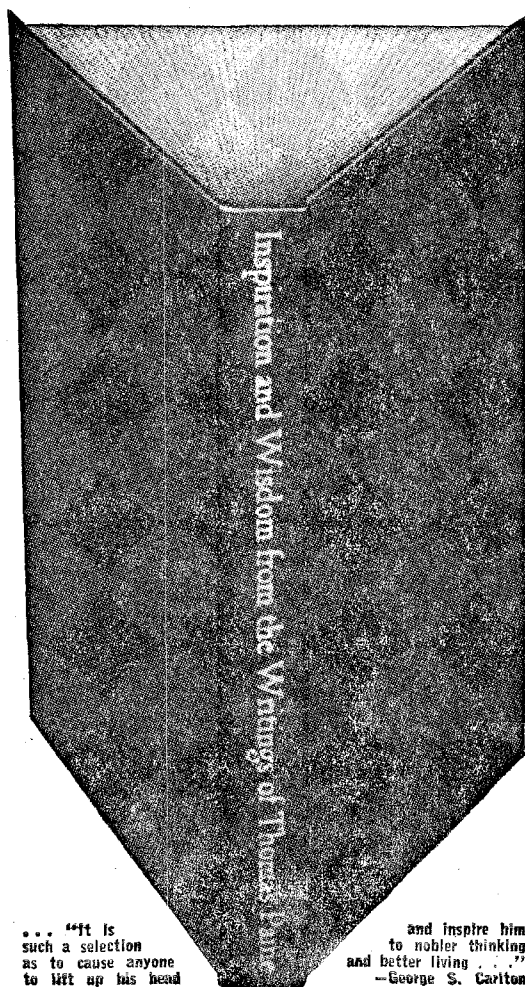
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